

Our Reconciliation

Journey

Reconciliation is part of the fabric of our organisation.

Life Without Barriers believes that Reconciliation must live in the hearts and minds of all Australians. Through our Reconciliation Action Plan we ensure the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are heard throughout our organisation, and that the work we do supports the cultural, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS

'Empowered Voices' artwork created by Keisha Leon (Waanyi and

Q 2005

First Aboriginal employee.

Gittaba Cultural Program, south-east Queensland -Boomi Hegarty, Elder Wakka Wakka people has facilitated this program for five years, connecting young Aboriginal people to their culture.

2007

First Aboriginal Identified position created in the Hunter region - Care Coordinator Cultural Support Plan (CSP) pilot commenced and CSP steering group established with Aboriginal staff from across NSW.

First Aboriginal Identified position created in South Australia to progress Reconciliation – Aboriginal Policy and Program Manager.

2006 b

Life Without Barriers Board participated in Cultural Respect Workshop.

Sharon Gollan appointed as Life Without Barriers Board member.

Aboriginal Carer Consultative Group held in Darwin.

Life Without Barriers participates in numerous events that are significant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week, Garma Festival and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children days.

2009

National Reconciliation Project Manager position created.

First meeting of the Life Without Barriers National Cultural Respect Steering Committee.

Life Without Barriers Reconciliation Action Plan officially launched.

Life Without Barriers signed a Covenant committing to employ 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over the next three years.

Sue Gordon appointed as Life Without Barriers Board member.

Recognised at the Aboriginal Employment Strategy Awards in Alice Springs with the Best Business Supporting Aboriginal Employment Award.

2010 **O**

Developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy.

Created the Sydney Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team.

A Therapeutic Residential Service was established in Rockhampton Queensland, to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with a strong focus on cultural support and community engagement.

Opened Warmum Community Disability House, which supports two males in partnership with the Warmum community, Kimberley region, Western Australia.

Life Without Barriers Chief Executive Claire Robbs signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation to establish a partnership for the delivery of services to people in the south west of Western Australia.

Men's Woodcarving Project, Riverland, South Australia, connects men to their culture.

This project was identified

through consultation with the

partnership with the Riverland

Aboriginal Men's Support Group

and the Personal Helpers and

Berri Aboriginal community,

specifically through a

Mentors Scheme.

2011

Established Bail Houses in Kununurra and Broome that ensure Aboriginal peoples, when bailed, remain in Country.



2013

Received recognition from Reconciliation Australia at Parliament House as a leader of Reconciliation in the community sector and was one of the few community organisations to participate in this significant event.

Developed a Driver Training Program at Kalgoorlie, Broome and Dampier Peninsula, Western Australia for young adults.

Commenced a Women's Refuge in Cooktown that provides services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Life Without Barriers launched the 2012–15 Reconciliation Action Plan.

Two child care centres were opened in the Northern Territory communities of Minjilang and Lajamanu. The centres have been established in strong partnership with the two communities using a capacity building model.

> Reconciliation is included in induction and learning and development pathways. By 2014, 969 staff had participated in cultural training.

> Traditional Owners are acknowledged through signage, artwork and flags across all Life Without Barriers offices.

Since 2009, Life Without Barriers has developed three Reconciliation Action Plans. Life Without Barriers has RAP Implementation Plans in all states and territories.

2014

Life Without Barriers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce has increased from 14 staff in 2009 to 181 in 2014.

Life Without Barriers provides a range of cultural programs that assist Aboric nai ana Torres Strait Islander people to maintain their connection to culture.

Partnered with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations to establish an Indigenous Employment Program to support the career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

First meeting of the Life Without Barriers Reconciliation Board Subcommittee

Life Without Barriers National Executive Reconciliation Forum held its inaugural meeting on 26 June 2014, as the first of three annual meetings.

The forum replaces the National Cultural Respect Steering Committee that met for the final time in December 2013.

Life Without Barriers National Reconciliation Portfolio was established in July 2014 to improve engagement of, and service delivery to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Life Without Barriers supports the Recognise Campaign, aimed at gaining recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian constitution.

Chief Executive Claire Robbs committed to the Racism It Stops with Me Campaign.

2015-

Awarded a Commonwealth contract to provide HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) services in two locations across Australia. HIPPY is a two-year homebased parenting and early childhood program that supports parents and carers to be their child's first teacher. Life Without Barriers's services is designed to accelerate the pre-school development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and provide training opportunities for parents.

Established partners with Ngalang Boodja-Noongar Employment Enterprise Development Aboriginal Corporation to engage new carers and Support Workers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Appointed the Facilitating Partner for the Stronger Community for Children (SCFC) in Lajamanu, NT. SCFC works with local Aboriginal organisations to build capacity and create employment. Enrolments at Minjilang and Lajamanu rose to over 130 children. Life Without Barriers QLD facilitated over 100 young people, including foster carers and staff, to attend the Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival in July 2017.

2017

Life Without Barriers Cairns team arranged a Return to Country trip to the remote Community of Kowanyama, Far North Queensland, to reunite four disability clients with kin and country. One client returned home to celebrate her 21st birthday and spent a few days fishing with her family, who were very happy to see her.

Partnered with Veolia to establish a scholarship program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to commit to full-time study.

Hosted cultural camps in Gumbaynggir Country for 26 children and young people living in out of home care.



Partnered with several training organisations in the NT to offer employment experiences for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees.

Introduced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Introduction online training for all staff and carers to complete within their first month.

Kalgoorlie Office in conjunction with the Goldfields Aboriginal Language Centre, produced the Our Values posters in local Ngaanyatjarra, Noongar, Pittjantjarra and Wangkatja languages.

Partnered with Orange Aboriginal Medical Service to provide medical services for all children in residential houses and Aboriginal children in foster care.

Launched a new Values & Culture Framework and Culture Statement to further nurture and embed our culture and values.

Co-sponsored a vibrant panel discussion in Newcastle on 4 July on the 2019 NAIDOC week themes: Voice, Treaty, Truth and the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Several staff and a Board member were privileged to join a crowd of around 250 and listen to panel members Dr Jackie Huggins, Professor John Maynard, and Sean Gordon, chaired by Jill Emberson, local journalist and Newcastle's Citizen of the Year for 2019.

2016

Invited by Reconciliation Australia to participate as a Corporate Partner to Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation (Waltja) following their acknowledgement at the 2014 Indigenous Governance Awards.

Established the National RAP Working Group (RWG).

Launched the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2016 – 2019 (our third RAP).

2018

Teamed up with pre-eminent childhood trauma academic and practitioner, Professor Helen Milroy, to launch 'A Soft Landing', a storybook to explain the out of home care experience to young children in foster care. Storytelling is one of the earliest forms of teaching and learning for children as well as being a central part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as well as an ageappropriate form of therapy. A Soft Landing has been made available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care within our organisation across the country.

Sponsored the Indigenous Women's Rugby League team, The Highlanders.

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Develop targeted COVID-19 messaging for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander staff, clients, carers and communities. This included cultural and age appropriate communications around what COVID-19 means for children and messaging on topics like how to conduct Sorry Business during a pandemic.

Partnered with Kubingui Youth and Family Development to prepare families for the return to school post lockdown.

Partnered with Thikkabilla Vibrations to take a group of young men from across our programs to Red Bank in Gundabooka National Park, 40kms outside Bourke NSW and Coonabarabran NSW. Participants and supervisors of the camp were from the Wiradjuri, Gamilaroi, Gomeroi and Dharug Nations. This was the second camp the boys have attended, and the focus was on hunting, gathering and spirituality. Participants learned practical ways of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and heard some of the stories that are passed on from one person to another in Aboriginal culture through the animals, landscape song and dance.

2020 - now o

Reconciliation Action Plan - Elevate 2022-2025.

In 2022, Reconciliation Australia affirmed Life Without Barriers with an Elevate RAP.

From 2020, Life Without Barriers invested time exploring and consulting with key stakeholders and partners on the commitments Life Without Barriers could embrace that would have the greatest impact for the future. The consultation and engagement aided in the development of the key actions and deliverables reflected in the Elevate RAP.